The Living faith of pagan times occupies among the people, a position which is equal with the Christian belief. The Orthodox Church, doubtless recognizing how deeply rooted the popular customs are, has tried to reconcile the two.

769 The ancestor cult is particularly important. The Ukrainian people entertain their ancestors on Christmas Eve. The table is set and the whole family are seated at it. Only a few seats are unoccupied - for the ancestors. Their bowls are filled with the traditional Christmas food: cooked wheat with honey and poppy, cooked fish and a cooked fruit mixture. "Little Father Frost" is also invited on Christmas Eve by the master of the house. The peasant steps in front of his house and calls: "Frost, frost, come and have supper with us!" Every guest, even the beggar, is welcome on Christmas Eve, for he might be an ancestor or Father Frost whom even the priest does not forget specially to invite. Hay is laid [789] under the tablecloth on the nights around the winter solstice, for all green things /138/ drive away the evil spirits. The place of honor in the house belongs to the "grandfather", a 533 sheaf of grain, symbolizing the ancestor. In the twelve magical nights between Christmas Eve and the Three Kings the famous koliad, pagan songs about the solstice, with a Christian flavor, exorcise all evil. Jesus Christ, Dazhdboh the sun god, and the Virgin Mary, all three are conjured up in one and the same song, in order to protect these worthy Christians.

527 The carnival belongs to the women; the men 789 have nothing to do with it, although on other occasions they do not scorn merry revels. On a Monday morning the married women of the village gather in the pub in order to begin a week of jolly drinking. This, too, of course, cannot pass without magic. The sorcery revolves about the "koloda", a stick which symbolizes a child. It is wound with tow and is now "born". The women congratulate each other on the "birth" with horilka,

527 789 grain whiskey. The revelry lasts all week just as in the case of a real birth.

527 771 769 The spring festival, the resurrection of nature, has for a long time coincided with the Christian Easter, the resurrection of the Lord, and the burial of Christ with the burial of winter. On Easter Sunday the Christian service and the pagan cult complement each other in a strange way. Scarcely has the priest prayed for the blessing of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost to descend upon his congregation, when the women join hands and dance around the church. It is a custom dating from ancient times to announce to the ancestor the beginning of field work at the spring festival, so that he can give them help and support. "Oh, ancestor!" the women sing on this occasion, "we plow the field, oh ancestor, we announce to you that we plow, that we sow, that we reap!" (82)

82. According to a verbal communication of the Ukrainian ethnographer and archaeologist V. Shcherbakivskyj, Prague.

789 527 The custom of "plowing-under", observed even before the First World War in East Ukraine when the field work begins, is probably unique. Again it is the women who, stark naked, exorcise the magic forces /139/ by drawing a plow over the nocturnal fields, and furrowing the earth amid a great deal of noise. Woe to the man who might eavesdrop on this grandiose fertility rite! The mischief-maker would have to pay dearly for it. (83) The drinking bout which the naked peasant

83. Zelenin: Russian (East Slavic) Folk Studies.

women celebrate near the church after they have finished their magic rite is called "lightning".

533 These are the same women who sing the lovely Ukrainian songs while they are working in the fields in spring and summer; for the Ukrainian be-

533 lieves that song is a part of work, and he has special symbolic songs for every type of work.

527 769 The Monday a week after Easter is dedicated to the ancestors. Well supplied with food and drink, the whole families set out for the cemeteries, just as in the days of Vladimir, in order to observe the death cult. They sit down on the graves of their ancestors, eat the food they have brought, share it with the dead by placing the latters' portion beside the Christian cross made of wood, and they do not forget to empty a small glass of horilka over it. The dead are honored if the visitors leave their graves in an elevated mood.

776 Summer passes by with the customary field work. It is a glorious time, the pumpkins and the melons ripen, the hollyhocks bloom again and people sleep out in the open. The harvest begins not without symbolic rituals; for the spirits must be thanked and one must pray for good weather. When the grain has been stored in the barns, the priest consecrates the harvest wreath, the grains of which are mixed among the seed the following year.

793 In the midst of this strange pagan-Christian world, the priest lives and works as the representative of Christ on earth. He knows the customs of the people from the time he is a child, and he joins in on many occasions. It is not sacrilegious when during a difficult birth he places the church key on the belly of the woman in labor, when he administers the Holy Sacrament to sick cattle or seals graves so that the dead may not /140/ return. Both shepherd and flock most earnestly believe that such deeds are efficacious and pleasing in the sight of God.

771 178 The First World War, the civil wars and finally the Bolshevist cudgel have destroyed this world; faith and superstition, holy mass and the spirit cult were no longer tolerated.